

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED DESIGNATION OF TYPE-SPECIES FOR
SIX GENERA IN THE SUPERFAMILY MURICACEA. Z.N.(S.) 1623
(see volume 21, pages 422-428)

By David F. McMichael (*The Australian Museum, Sydney, Australia*)

I wish to make the following comments on Dr. A. Myra Keen's proposals concerning type-species in the Superfamily Muricacea (Z.N.(S.) 1623).

In general I am very much in favour of attempts to stabilise generic names in the Muricacea, but in three of the cases submitted by Dr. Keen I think there are better solutions. My comments are numbered in the order of Dr. Keen's submissions.

1. The identity of *Murex mancinella* Linné is certainly obscure as has often been pointed out. I agree that the best solution in this case would be to regard the species as a *nomen dubium*. However, I believe that Dr. Keen has erred in citing the type-species of *Mancinella* Link. The exact text in Link (1807, p. 115) is as follows:

Mancinella. Igelschnecke. (Here follows a few lines of description in German, concluding with the broad synonymic reference (*Murex* L.)

M. aculeata. Gezackte I. *Murex mancinella*. L.G. p. 3538. M. C. 3. t. 101. f. 967. 968.—*M. hystrix* . . .

It is clear from this that in his genus *Mancinella*, Link included a nominal species, *M. aculeata*, to which he referred *Murex mancinella* Link and Gmelin as synonyms and which he defined by reference to two figures in Martini-Chemnitz, "Conchylien Cabinet". The species *Mancinella aculeata* Link is listed by Sherborn (1922, p. 50).

According to the International Code, Article 68, (d)—"If a newly established nominal genus contains among its originally included nominal species one possessing the generic name as its specific name . . . as a cited synonym, that *nominal species* is ipso facto the type-species (my italics)". Thus the type-species is not the cited synonym, but the "nominal species originally included" which in the case in question is *Mancinella aculeata* Link. The type of this nominal species must be the specimen figured in Martini-Chemnitz, 3, pl. 101, figures 967 and 968, which is clearly identifiable as *Mancinella mancinella* auct. Thus, while I agree that *Mancinella mancinella* Linné should be rejected as suggested, I would suggest that the correct type-species for *Mancinella* Link is *M. aculeata* Link, 1807, which is identical with and has priority over *M. gemmulata* Lamarck. Since neither name has been used widely, the adoption of *aculeata* Link would not upset current usage.

2. I am in full agreement with Dr. Keen's suggestions regarding *Chicoreus* Montfort, which would be in conformity with current usage in Australia.

3. I have no comments to make on the matter concerning the name *Polyplex*.

4. In regard to *Thalessa* H. & A. Adams, I agree with the need to distinguish between *Murex hippocastanum* Linné and *M. hippocastanum* auct., and it seems clear that *Purpura aculeata* Deshayes is an available substitute. There is however the possibility that, if *aculeata* Link be accepted as the type-species of *Mancinella*, then *aculeata* Deshayes would be preoccupied in *Mancinella* should any subsequent worker regard *Mancinella* and *Thalessa* as synonyms.

However, the question arises as to whether it is desirable to resurrect the genus *Thalessa*, which seems to have been little used, was overlooked by Thiele and referred to the synonymy of two other genera by Wenz, when the name *Menathais* Iredale is available, with type-species *pica* Blainville (for which *tuberosa* Röding is considered an earlier name). *Menathais* has been used by a number of Australian workers during recent years (Allan, 1950, p. 144, Cotton, 1965, p. 1, Iredale and McMichael, 1962, p. 74) and it has been used in the identification of shells for a number of other scientists and shell collectors throughout Australia. It might therefore be a better solution to confirm *Murex hippocastanum* Linné as the type-species of *Thalessa*, and let the name disappear in the synonymy of *Volema*. Alternatively, both *Thalessa* H. & A. Adams and *Murex hippocastanum* Linné should be placed on the appropriate Index of Rejected Names.

5. In regard to *Kalydon* and *Xymene*, I fully support Dr. Keen's proposals which will be in conformity with current usage.

6. In regard to *Tolema* Iredale, I cannot support Dr. Keen's suggestion that the species *Purpura sertata* Hedley, 1903, should be confirmed as type-species. When Iredale created the genus *Tolema* he did so in the belief that the adult shell figured by him was worthy of generic separation. It is an accepted axiom that the type of a genus is in fact a species of animal, not a name, and it can generally be argued that when an author founds a genus on a clearly recognizable species, then that species ought to be regarded as the type, even though it was misidentified (see for example, Mayr, Linsley and Usinger, 1953, pp. 269-270). The correct way to bring this about is by application to the International Commission, and Laseron (1955) did not do this. Instead he took unilateral action and renamed the misidentified type-species of *Tolema* as *Tolema australis* Laseron, thus retaining the generic name *Tolema* for its accepted usage. For the group of species to which the true *Purpura sertata* Hedley apparently belongs, Laseron proposed *Liniaxis* with a new species *L. elongata* Laseron as type-species. Most Australian workers have adopted *Tolema* in the sense of Iredale and Laseron, and have used *Liniaxis* for the *elongata*-*sertata* series (e.g. Macpherson and Gabriel, 1962, pp. 182-183, Allan, 1950, p. 242, Iredale and McMichael, 1962, pp. 72-73) and a number of overseas workers have also used *Tolema* in the same way (e.g. Wenz, 1938, p. 1132, Kira, 1961, pp. 64-65). However, if Dr. Keen's proposal is adopted then *Tolema* may have to be applied to the shells now known as *Liniaxis*. There does not seem to be any sense in taking action under the plenary powers which would make *Tolema* represent a group different from that which its author intended and different from that for which it has been used by a number of recent authors. Such action becomes even less acceptable when it involves the replacement of the generic name *Liniaxis* which has become accepted at least in Australia.

The fact that *Tolema* (if continued in its present usage) would have to compete with the names *Mipus* Gregorio and *Babelomurex* Coen is beside the point. Neither are *nomina oblita* and consequently the three names are available for selection on priority grounds by any author who regards them as representing the same taxon.

I therefore request that the type-species of *Tolema* Iredale, be determined as *Tolema australis* Laseron, the first available name for *Tolema* "*sertata*" of Iredale, not *Purpura sertata* Hedley.

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